

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USLO PEKING

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VIENNA PLS PASS TO USIA ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SHIRLEY
FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL RO

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FEATURE FILM SHOWINGS

REF: A) CM-1542, B) BUCHAREST 2610 / (1974) (NOTAL)

1. YOU'LL RECALL WE TALKED BRIEFLY WHEN I WAS IN WASHINGTON REGARDING MY HOPE THAT THE FEATURE FILM PROGRAM COULD BE CONTINUED AND EXPANDED. OF THE FILMS OFFERED IN REF A I WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING TITLES, LISTED IN PRIORITY ORDER: "SUNSHINE BOYS", "GIVE 'EM HELL, HARRY"; "THE TOWERING INFERNO"; "ROOSTER COGBURN"; AND "HEARTS OF THE WEST". I ALSO WANT TO REAFFIRM MY APPRECIATION FOR THE ASSISTANCE THE AGENCY AND MPAA HAVE PROVIDED IN MAKING THESE FILMS AVAILABLE SINCE I FIRST RAISED THE QUESTION LAST YEAR. THEY ARE AN ESPECIALLY USEFUL PROGRAM ASSET FOR OUR
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ACTIVITIES IN A NUMBER OF AREAS.

2. WE HAVE DELAYED OUR REPLY TO THE AGENCY'S CM IN ORDER TO REVIEW THE VARIOUS END-OF-YEAR CRITICS' CHOICES OF 1975'S BEST FILMS, E.G., NEW YORK FILM CRITICS'; "TIME" MAGAZINE'S 10 BEST, ETC, FOR OTHER POSSIBLE TITLES WHICH MIGHT BE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO BUCHAREST AUDIENCES WE ARE TRYING TO REACH. I CONFESS SURPRISE AT THE CONSPICUOUS ABSENCE ON THE AGENCY'S LIST OF AT LEAST TWO OF 1975'S MOST ACCLAIMED FILMS, NAMELY "NASHVILLE" AND "JAWS". WHILE MOST OF THE FILMS LISTED IN PARA ONE WOULD HAVE APPEAL FOR SOME OF OUR INTENDED CONTACTS, THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT "NASHVILLE" AND "JAWS" WOULD ATTRACT A MAJOR PERCENTAGE OF THE QUALITY AUDIENCE WE INVITE TO THESE SPECIAL SHOWINGS.

3. I REALIZE THAT BOTH FILMS ARE MILDLY CONTENTIOUS, THE FORMER FOR ITS POLITICAL AND SOCIAL COMMENTARY, THE LATTER FOR ITS EXTREME VIOLENCE. BUT BOTH HAVE BEEN ACCLAIMED AS OUTSTANDING CINEMATIC ACHIEVEMENTS. WE FACE A SOMEWHAT CONTRADICTORY PROBLEM IN SELECTING FILMS FOR OUR SPECIAL AUDIENCES. SOME ARE SO WELL PLACED AS TO ACCEPT AN INVITATION ONLY IF THE FILM IS BOTH OUTSTANDING AND REALLY CURRENT (I.E., THEY WILL PROBABLY SEE IT AFTER A YEAR OR SO IN A VERY CLOSED-CIRCUIT TYPE SET UP); OTHERS ARE NOT IN THAT INNERMOST CIRCLE HERE BUT ARE STILL VERY IMPORTANT TO US AND YET WILL NOT COME OUT FOR MUCH LESS THAN THE REALLY VERY GOOD AND WELL KNOWN FILMS. EITHER WAY TIMELINESS AND QUALITY GIVE US THE BEST CHANCES OF USING THE FILMS TO MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE. I AM NOT UNAWARE THAT IN SOME COUNTRIES COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE FILM DISTRIBUTORS CONCERNED TO MAKE THESE FILMS AVAILABLE TO US. IN ROMANIA SUCH A CONSIDERATION DOES NOT ARISE. THUS, I WOULD APPRECIATE THE AGENCY'S ASCERTAINING THE AVAILABILITY OF THESE TWO FILMS. IF IT WOULD BE USEFUL, I WOULD BE HAPPY TO WRITE OR SEND A CABLE MESSAGE TO JACK VALENTI OR TO ANYONE ELSE TO MAKE A PERSONAL PITCH. PLS ADVISE.
BARNES

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